REASONS WHY ROMAN-CATHOLICKS Should not be persecuted.

Held forth by a moderate hand.

SEeing all men by the instinct of Nature, and Christians by the doctrine of Charity are taught not to doe to others what they would not have done to themselves; in which is included not to hurt any man, who seeks no hurt to you: and the rule of prudence teaches, when you are encumbred with more inconveniencies, to bear with the lesser untill you have rid your self of the greater, it seems a fair consequence to me, that, seeing *England* is pestered with many sects, the Governours ought in reason to consider, whether it be not convenient to bear with the most agreeing, that they may with more liberty and power disengage themselves from the annoyance of the more desperate and more hardly-curable ulcer, cankering in the bowels of their Church. The proposition therefore of this paper, is this, whether the *Roman-Catholick*, amongst all religions infesting the Ecclesiastical Government publickly settled, be not the most agreeing, and least noyseme and harmful to that Church which is stiled the old Protestant, and so not deserving, nor fitting to be persecuted; and for this I offer my

First Reason.

The *Roman Catholick* differs from all others in this, that it is undoubtedly the Religion of *England*, for about a thousand years standing, and the which yielded immediately to the Ecclesiasticall Government now established. It seems therefore to claim by right the privilege that Christs Church gave to the Jewish, to be buried with honour; and that also which was in a manner by no-bird granted to the Heathens, that Persuasion and not Force should be the the meanes to draw it to truth.

[1663]

The ſecond Reaſon.

If the *Roman Catholick* deſerves to be perſecuted, let the *Presbyterian* and the *Fanatick* be executioners of that juſtice upon her; for they pretend not to bear any honour to her. But ſhall the old Proteſtant which confeſſes her to be a *true* Church, which profeſſes her ſelf to be ſprung from her loyns, bear the ſtandard before thoſe others, whom ſhe her ſelf accounts misbelievers, to defeat thoſe Relicks of goodneſſe which ſhe acknowledges to be left in the Roman? A Gentleman whoſe Mothers looſe life is ſcandalous to him, firſt ſeeks to cover his Mothers ſhame; If he cannot doe that, he leaves it to others to reproach it, ſtands himſelf by in a mourning manner; ever remembring, how bad ſoever ſhe be, yet it was ſhe that bore him and bred him. How then can the Proteſtant without his own diſgrace, ſtand in the fore-front of thoſe who defie his *Mother* for a *Whore*.

The third Reaſon.

Seeing the Proteſtant acknowledges the *Catholick-Roman* for ſo *true* a Church, that ſhe profeſſeth all *Fundamental truth*, and that Chriſtian Souls may attain *eternal felicity* in her, and by her, what reaſon can there be render'd why he ſhould perſecute her? Is not all the pretence of Religion the attaining of *Eternal Bliſſe*? If that be acknowledged, muſt not all the reſt be pure queſtions of Opinion or Diſcipline? of better or worſe? of Ceremonies not of Subſtance? Is this a ſufficient cauſe to diſturb the Union of the Common-wealth, to ſet a ſeparation betwixt Parents and Children, Brothers and Kins-folks, and wholly to ſeek to diſtract a notable parcel of the Common-wealth from its entire body? Beſides, can any man that has any Religious thoughts in him, think of perſecuting a *Catholick* for being an enemy to him, without knocking his breſt, and reflecting, *what do I do? muſt not I live for all Eternity in perfect friendſhip and brotherhood with this man, and ſhall I now upon quirks and fought quarrels annoy him, onely becauſe I can.*

The fourth Reaſon.

And truly if it be well examined, the difference, between the Proteſtants and *Catholicks* will appear in the main Tenets to be differences more in Animoſity and words, than real ſubſtantial Points. As, about the *Bleſſed Sacrament*; The Proteſtants do not *deny* Tranſubſtantiation, but onely *not admit* it. Their expreſſion is that Chriſt's body is truly and really in the Sacrament; and that it matters not *how*, whether by Tranſubſtantiation or otherwiſe.

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Concerning the *Popes Infallibility* and *Authority*, the Proteſtant Doctors explicate it ſo, that it is eaſily reconcileable with the Ancient Doctrine of the *Sorbon* and French Church lately confirmed by the Parliament of *Paris*, in the condemnation of certain propoſitions made ready to be maintained, or maintained in the *Sorbon* and the *Ieſuits* Colledge. As for the Kings Headſhip of the Church, the chief Proteſtant Biſhops and Writers have ſo declared it, that *Catholicks* cannot deny the practice to have been of *Catholick* Emperours and Kings. Like ambiguities are to be found in the queſtions of *Juſtification*, *Merits*, *praying for the dead*, and other points of moment: wherefore can it be excuſed from a great want of Charity to make a Diviſion and Perſecution whither there be a true cauſe for it or no, farther then that the *Roman Catholick* ſticks to the ancient phraſe and form of ſpeaking, the Proteſtant by not doing ſo falls at unawares into equivocal terms which are apt to lead unto errour; ſpecially ſince the power of clearing this is wholly and ſolely in the Proteſtants hands, the *Catholicks* wanting power for it.

The fifth Reaſon.

Becauſe the main difference in controverſies of *Faith* conſiſting in the *Rule* by which matters of Faith are to be agreed upon, thoſe who agree in ſuch a Rule are very near an agreement in Faith. Now all except the Old Proteſtant aſſigne their Rule to be *Scripture*, but ſo that they ground the Interpretation thereof purely upon their own induſtries and underſtandings; ſo that the main judgement is placed in *themſelves* and their own breaſts, which is a principle annulling all umpirage towards Agreement: but the Old Proteſtant appeales both to Tradition and Fathers, profeſſing that their Faith came to them by hands from the Apoſtles, and that they differ from *Catholicks* only in ſuch points as the *Roman-Catholicks* have added to this Tradition; beſides, they openly profeſſe to ſtand to the Interpretation of the Fathers; which two are the ſole grounds whereupon *Catholicks* likewiſe found their Faith, ſo that it remaineth evident, that they have a *common rule* whereon to work to an Union, which no others have; whence it followeth that their agreement is not to be deſpaired, nor they to be perſecuted who differ from them onely in the ſeduction of particular Articles out of the agreed grounds; ſince even Proteſtants themſelves give one to the other liberty to diſſent in like deductions.

The ſixth Reaſon

Is, that moderate Proteſtants in divers parts of Chriſtendome agree very well with *Catholicks*; eſpecially the *Lutherans*, who profeſſe to have more liking

to *Roman Catholicks* then to *Calvinists*; ſo in *Germany* the Duke of *Saxony*, who are the heads of the *Lutheran* party, generally agree better with the Emperour and other *Catholick* States than with the *Calviniſts*. The *Swiſſers* likewiſe for many yeares agreed in a firm league, though there be many of them of divers opinions from the *Roman-Catholick*; and if they had of late yeares ſome troubles, it is well known it was by the inſtigation of our late Tyrant *Cromwell*, who ſent an Agent of ſet purpoſe to make an Enmity betwixt the *Catholick* Cantons and the reſt. Likewiſe in *France*, ſince the agreement made by their Kings they have lived ſo friendly togeather, that when any ſtirrs aroſe, there never wanted *Huguenots* in the Kings Army: It being plain, that ſome hot ſpirits attempted more priviledge than was due according to their agreements: and divers times, the Generalls of the *French* Armies were *Huguenots*, notwithſtanding the reproaches of their *Catholick* Enemies raiſed upon that occaſion.

The ſeventh Reaſon.

To conſider that the bordering countries with whom our commerce both of Peace and Warre obligeth us to treat, are for the moſt part *Roman-Catholicks*: as *France*, *Spain*, and *Portugal*; and the difference of Religion, ſpecially if we be eſteemed haters of theirs, is a great impediment of Negotiation. The firſt Lord of *Briſſell*, though in heart a Proteſtant, yet told K. *James* he found great impediments upon that ſcore. My L. of *Leiceſter*, when he was Embaſſadour in *France*, could never come to perſonal conference with Cardinal *Richelieu*, who governed the King of *France* his councells, for the ſame reaſon; and eſteemed it a great hinderance of the progreſſe of his treaties. The *Hollanders* have given of late five Churches to the *Catholicks* in divers Towns, that ſo they might not be reputed Enemies of that Religion. But our occaſions are more preſſing; ſpecially when occaſion of *Marriage* offers it ſelf; as appears by the marriage of his preſent Majeſty, and his Father: And K. *James*, when he had married his daughter the Queen of *Bohemia* by the Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury's* advice, who was (though a Biſhop) the head of the *Puritans*, ſaid that he had ſacrificed her to the Goſpel. The ſame reaſon was the cauſe why the ſaid Lady miſſed to be Queen of *Spain*, and his Majeſties Father to bring the *Infanta* of *Spain* into *England*. And, to conclude, our States-men underſtand how hard it is to find a convenient match for our Kings otherwhere then with ſome *Catholick* Lady. Nor can any man of underſtanding be ignorant, how diſtaſtefull it muſt needs be to a Queen, to ſee thoſe of her Religion to be afflicted without further cauſe than becauſe they are in faith conformable to what ſhe hath been bred up in.

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The eighth Reason.

That the *Roman-Catholick* by his inſtruction and education is a friend to *ſetled Government*, and enemy to *Innovation*. He relies upon *Antiquity* and *Succeſſion*; hath a great apprehenſion of *Forefathers*; and has all Innovation for ſuſpected. Yet, though he be conſtant to any Government eſtabliſhed, he is moſt propitious to *Monarchy*; the which he acknowledges in *God*, and as great a participation of it in the *Church* as ſtands with the nature and preſervation of it. But, whatſoever policy he follows, his Faith leads him to a ſtrict Obedience. Whereas the liberty of the *Presbyterie*, or rather their reſtleſſe Ambition (ever beginning with Rebellion) and the *Enthuſiaſme* of the *Fanatick*, permit no Settlednesſe where they gain a Strength. The old *Proteſtant* therefore, who acknowledges a kind of Monarchy both in State and Church, hath far more reaſon to correſpond with the *Roman-Catholick*, than with either of the other two.

The ninth Reaſon.

I ſee it may be objected, that the *Roman-Catholick* holds Poſitions inconſiſtent with good Government either of Church or State: as, that the *Pope* hath a plenary Authority over the Church of God, which ſeems to be declared in the Council of *Florence*. That he hath a temporall power indirectly to depoſe Princes, claimed from the *Lateran* Council. That he hath an Infallibility by which he can force all this to be believed, and what elſe ſoever he ſhall think fitting, under pain of damnation. Neither can it be deni'd that ſome *Catholicks*, ſeduced by Preachers and Divines intereſſed in the Greatneſſe of the Court of *Rome*, doe fondly believe ſuch Abſurdities; but they are far from being *Catholick Faith*, as being truly abominable errours, and ſo accounted, as appeares by the ancient and conſtant Doctrine of the Church of *France*, newly confirmed by the Parliament of *Paris*. The Doctrine of the Councils is enhanced beyond their intention. The Council of *Florence* giveth no more than the acknowledged Authority of governing the Church as Saint *Peter* did, which practice manifeſts to have been the Mediation of Biſhops: And what is cited out of the *Lateran* Council, is but a Law enacted by the conſent of Temporall Princes to be executed upon their own Subjects.

The tenth Reaſon.

Alledgeth, That it was never the intention of our Princes and Parliaments

to make Lawes againſt the *Roman-Catholicks* for Religion's ſake, but ever pretended they did this becauſe the *Catholicks* were ſuſpected to acknowledge a forreign Power in the Kigndome; as appeares by this, that for divers yeares there were no Lawes made againſt them, untill ſome *Sticklers* came from beyond the Seas, and began to plot againſt Prince and ſtate, who were from the very beginnings cry'd out upon by the uncorrupted Party of the *Catholicks*, and divers Books yet extant were writ by the *Catholick* Clergy of thoſe times againſt thoſe proceedings. It is alſo regiſter'd, that Queen *Elizabeth* in the laſt year of her Reign, made a Proclamation in favour of the *Innocent Party of* Catholicks. King *Iames* after that hideous plot againſt his Perſon and Realm, declared publickly that it was done by a ſmall party of *Catholicks*, and framed an Oath to difference the Loyall from the Diſloyall: Howſoever, by the wile of the *guilty Party* making advantage of ſome miſtakes in Divinity, the puniſhment light heavy upon the main Body of *Catholicks*. Now then, ſince the point of *Loyalty* is cleared by the Profeſſion of the *French* Church and *Sorbon*, what appearance remains there why the Lawes made againſt Errours condemned by *Catholicks*, ſhould be preſſed, or remain in force againſt the *Deteſters* of them?

The eleventh Reaſon

Sheweth, how perſecution forceth *Catholicks* to put themſelves in danger to be made diſloyal to their Countrey. Firſt, becauſe the Embaſſadours of friendly Princes having the liberty of free Chappels, *Catholicks*, who otherwiſe have not commodity of ſerving God, are forced to ſeek it there; and by haunting their Houſes get acquaintance amongſt them and their Families, and are glad to carry them any Newes with which they hope to pleaſe them. And by ſuch meanes it is well known that in hard times much Intelligence was procured. This was encreaſed hence, that *Catholicks*, when they were wronged by under Officers, or by falſe Information, could find no way ſo eaſie to help themſelves as by the Mediation of Embaſſadours. Another branch of the ſame evil is, that *Catholicks* being inclined by their Religion to Learning, and being hindred from convenient breeding here in *England* by the forbidding of *Catholick* Schoolmaſters, were forced to ſend their Children into forreign parts, and thoſe not ever the moſt friendly. Where it is eaſie to conceive what power the impreſſions of ſuch Nations and their own Tutors (who likely had themſelves been bred in the ſame parts) muſt needs have over ſuch a tender age, and ſo corrupt the hopes of the whole Families when they grew up to be Maſters of them.

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The Twelfth Reason

Marketh the weakneſs of the Oppoſition, which is the main that is advanced againſt the *Roman-Catholick*'s liberty; which is, that it would deſtroy the ſetled Religion of the Church of *England*. But I cannot believe any hearty Proteſtant will hold it forth. For, ſince the *Proteſtant* grounds his diviſion againſt the *Roman* Church upon the blind obedience to the *Pope*, by which they conceive *Catholicks* bound to explicate Scripture as the *Pope* will order them; he muſt be perſwaded, that, ſetting this on ſide, that is, ſtanding to Scripture onely, they muſt hold the *Proteſtant* is able to convince againſt the *Roman-Catholick*; which if he be able to do, there is no doubt but that they muſt hold the *Roman* Party will not be able to divert any man of underſtanding from the *Proteſtant Profeſſion*. To this we may adde thoſe advantages which the publicity of the Churches and Church-ſervice affords them over the *Roman* Congregation. Beſides that it is almoſt impoſſible for the *Catholick* Party to have any ſtore of good *Preachers*. For where there is neither Reward nor Auditory for the *Preacher*, it ſeems labour loſt to beſtow much time in poliſhing of periods, ſeeking flouriſhes, and an exact couching in order his matter and perſwaſions.

The laſt Reaſon.

My laſt attempt is rather a Requeſt to the Governours of the *Proteſtant* Church, then any new Reaſon: And it is, that they will pleaſe conſider whether a bearing with *Catholicks* is not likely to increaſe their power. For, when their words ſhall be heard, not as words of Enemies, (as in perſecution they are taken to be) but as of Familiars and Well-wiſhers, plain it is they will be far better accepted of. But that which ſpecially I deſire to be conſidered is, that if they can plainly make out that their firſt Conſecrators were themſelves truly conſecrated, It will very likely draw with it both that they are to be reverenced by *Catholicks* according to their character, being never excommunicated by name nor Eccleſiaſtically depoſed, and that they are to be obeyed by obligation of Conſcience in all ſuch matters as are in the power of Kings to encharge them with; that is, in all the Temporalities belonging to the Church, and peradventure in all things but what concerns either Faith or Sacraments: the which, how great an honour and peradventure amplification of their Courts it will prove, they can better underſtand than I expreſſe.

We humbly intreat the *Proteſtants* to look upon *Roman Catholicks* according to what they have ſeen and experienced of them; to wit, as their Fellow-Souldiers in defence of their Kings. I have heard of thirty chief Officers, as

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Colloneis and their immediate Officers, at one time bestowed in the deceased Kings service; and a Challenge made in his presence for any man to name a *Roman-Catholick* who had been false unto him. Look upon us, as whose fortunes and many of our lives have been imployed in the endeavours to restore you to that flourishing estate in which you now reign. If his Majesty with your consents hath graciously pardoned so many *Offenders*, whose swords and Firelocks were bent to draw his own sacred Bloud, can you think it fitting His Majesty should allay the revengfull thirst of those very men, with the oppression and bloud of those who are particularly hated for having maintained His Majesties Right and your own Possession.

If it be all our duties to procure His Majesties Glory far and near, and nothing is more glorious to a great Monarch than the maintenance of His *Royal Word*, and particularly in that Divine quality of *Clemency* by which he is specially the Image of God; can you endure that the Enemies of the Crown should presse *Catholicks* to disloyalty and dispairing of His Majesties goodness, upon pretence of not observing His gracious promise of providing for tender Consciences, which He was pleased to make at *Breda*, as a donative befitting the joyfull day of His Restitution to His desirous and desired People? And yet this hath been done, and without doubt will be more loudly clamoured, if you do not second His Majesties gracious Intentions expressed in His late Declaration. And because we doubt not but that this point will touch your heartmost to the quick, with this in our mouths we recommend our selves and our cause to your wise and gracious consideration.

May it please therefore the Wisdome and goodnest of both Houses of Parliament, setting aside those speculative questions which have not the main good of the Commonwealth, to see that the permission of Roman Catholicks *is not onely passable for the quiet and union of the Subject, but also profitable and advantageous to the generall good of the Commonwealth; and not to let that be hindred for the clashing of Scholler-like disputes and School-controversies.*

F I N I S.